

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
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EXDIS

FOR NEA

AND SUPPORTED BY IT. THIS COULD ULTIMATELY LEAD TO
A KING OF "SIKKIM SOLUTION" TO ACCOMMODATE PAKISTANI SECURITY
INTERESTS, EVEN THE THREAT OF WHICH COULD SERVE AS A
PRESSURE POINT ON ANY AFGHAN REGIME. PAKISTAN WOULD, OF
COURSE, WELCOME AND HAIL THE ADVENT OF AN "ISLAMIC REPUBLIC."
IF U.S.S.R. INTERVZINED TO HELP RADICAL LEFT GOVERNEMENT,
SITUATION MIGHT CHANGE WITH PAKISTAN PROVIDING HELP TO ITS
"ISLAMIC BROTHERS".

D. INDIA. INDIA'S FLEXIBILITY IN DEALING WITH DISTANT
PROBLEMS WOULD ASSERT ITSELF, AND THAT COUNTRY COULD LIVE
WITH ANY KIND OF OUTCOME.

E. PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA. PRC INTERESTS IN INTERNAL
DEVELOPMZNTS IN AFGHANISTAN WOULD PROBABLY BE LIMITED TO A
DESIRE TO DIMINISH SOVIET INFLUENCE WHEREVER POSSIBLE AND
TO MONITOR ALL SOVIET ACTIVITY HERE, HAVING IN MIND MAINTAIN-
ING SOME KIND OF PRESENCE HERE AS A "REMINDER" THAT THERE IS
BESIDES THE U.S.S.R ANOTHER GREAT POWER NEIGHBOR ON
AFGHANISTAN'S BORDERS. CHINA WOULD BE TROUBLED BY ANY
SITUATION IN WHICH IT APPEARED TO SOVIETS STOOD TO GAIN
COMPLETE HEGEMONY OVER AFGHANISTAN, EVEN TO THE EXTENT
OF THE "VZTO POWER" THE U.S.S.G. APPEARS TO EXERCISE OVZR
A NATION LIKE FINLAND. THE EFFECTING A POLICY OF GREATER
INVOLVZMENT WITH AFGHANISTAN THE CHINESE WOULD LIKELY
USE THEIR CLOSE FRIENDSHIP WITH PAKISTAN, PUTTING THE
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PAKISTANIS "OQT IN FRONT" FOR THEIR INTERESTS AND
ADDING IMPETUS TO PAKISTAN'S OWN DIPLOMACY TOWARD
AFGHANISTAN. ON THE OTHER HAND IT IS CONCEIVWBLE
THAT THIS EXCHANGE COULD WORK IN ANOTHER DIRECTION,

AND THAT THE PAKISTANIS COULD EXPLOIT THEIR CHINESE TIES TO EXACT GREATER CHINESE INTEREST IN AFGHANISTAN AND PARTICIPATION IN AFGHAN AFFAIRS THAN WOULD BE WARRANTED BY PURELY CHINESE INTERESTS AND PERCEPTIONS.

V. IMPLICATION FOR THE USG

THE DYNAMICS OF AFGHAN POLITICS ARE DIFFICULT FOR THE U.S. TO INFLUENCE. THIS WOULD BE TRUE EVEN IF WE UNDERSTOOD ALL FACTORS OF THIS DYNAMIC, WHICH WE DO NOT. IN THE EVENT OF CHANGE, SUDDEN OR COMING IN STAGES, OUR OWN ABILITY TO AFFECT INTERNAL EVZNTS WOULD BE MINIMAL. WE WOULD BE FACED WITH BIDDING OUR TIME UNTIL AN AFGHAN OUTCOME WAS REACHED, AT WHICH MOMENT WE WOULD ENDEAVOR TO ESTABLISH THE BEST POSSIBLE RELATIONS. FORTUNATELY OUR MODEST LEVEL OF INVOLVEMZNT IN AFGHANISTAN WOULD ENABLE US TO WAIT OUT A SOLUTION TO CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT WITHOUT GRAVE CONSEQUENCES AT LEAST IN THE SHORT RUN TO U.S. REGIONAL INTERESTS. THE MAJOR CONCERN FOR THE UNITED STATES WOULD LIE IN A PERIOD OF PROLONGED INTERNAL CHAOS WITH NO ESTABLISHED CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. THIS SITUATION WOULD DIRECTLY AFFECT THE U.S.S.R., PAKISTAN AND IRAN, PROVOKING POTENTIALLY DISRUPTIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE REGION. INTERNAL CHAOS WOULD BE DANGEROUS TO THE AMERICAN AND FOREIGN COMMUNITY IN AFGHANISTAN SINCE IT MIGHT INVOLVE AN UPSURGE OF XENOPHOBIA. THE LOOTING OF KABUL CANNOT BE RULED OUT AND INDEED HAS HISTORICAL PRECEDENT IN THE 20TH CENTURY. HOWEVER, EVEN DURING THE CHAOTIC BACHA-E-SAQAO INTERLUDE OF 1929, THE LIVES AND PROPERTY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS WERE RESPECTED.

A CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT BROUGHT ABOUT BY A DETERIORATION OF RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN OR REBELLION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WOULD PROBABLY RESULT IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MORE CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MORE CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT IN AFGHANISTAN WOULD NOT THREATEN REGIONAL OR U.S. INTERESTS.

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AS SET OUT IN III, A COUP STAGED BY A SELF-PROCLAIMED EXTREME LEFTIST GROUP WOULD PROBABLY NOT SURVIVE. THE DANGER TO U.S. INTERESTS WOULD ONCE AGAIN LIE IN A PROLONGED PERIOD OF INTERNAL CHAOS AND INSTABILITY WITH ITS UNFORESEEABLE CONSEQUENCES FOR REGIONAL STABILITY.

A LEFTIST COUP DISGUISED AS A BLOW AGAINST TYRANNY AND FOR CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT WOULD, UNTIL THE REGIME CONSOLIDATED ITS HOLD, BE CONSTRAINED IN UNDERTAKING ANY RADICAL DEPARTURES FROM PAST FOREIGN POLICY. ANY DRAWTIC MOVE TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION OR REJECTION OF THE WEST WOULD REINFORCE FEARS THAT IT WAS "ANTI-ISLAMIC" AND HENCE TEND TO UNLEASH THE CONSERVATIVE RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS TO

INCITE THE COUNTRYSIDE TO REBEL, THUS ENDANGERING THE
HOLD OF THE GOVERNMENT. NOR COULD THE REGIME EMPLOY A
MORE BELLIGERENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS PAKISTAN TO TURN THE
PUBLIC'S ATTENTION FROM DOMESTIC CONCERNS. THIS WOULD
BE UNPOPULAR WITH THE MILITARY, WHICH IS AWARE OF THE
PROBABLY AFGHAN DEFEAT IN A CLASH WITH PAKISTAN. IT WOULD
BE ANATHEMA TO AFGHAN RELIGIOUS LEADERS WHO HAVE STRONG
TIES WITH PAKISTAN AND WOULD SEE SUCH A CONFLICT AS AN
UNJUSTIFIED KILLING OF MOSLEMS BY MOSLEMS. IT WOULD BE
UNPALATABLE TO TAJIKS, HAZARAS, UZBEKS, TURKMEN AND OTHER
NON-PUSHTUN ETHNIC GROUPS WHO PROBABLY CONSTITUTE THE
MAJORITY OF AFGHWNS AND WHO ARE AT BEST INDIFFERENT
OR RESENTFUL OF DAOUD'S PUSHTUNISTAN POLICY. IT IS UNLIKELY
THEREFORE THAT A DISGUISED LEFTIST REGIME WOULD, AT LEAST
FOR THE SHORT TERM, THREATEN REGIONAL STABILITY BY TURNING
AFGHANISTAN INTO A SOVIET SATELLITE OR BY PROVOKING A
CONFRONTATION WITH PAKISTAN.

IN THE EVENT OF GOVERNMENT CHANGE WE SHOULD CONSULT
URGENTLY (PERHAPS IN THE CENTO CONTEXT) WITH THE IRANIANS
AND THE PAKISTANIS TO EXPLORE WAYS IN WHICH WE COULD,
IN CONCERT, INFLUENCE AN OUTCOME WHICH WOULD NOT BE
INIMICAL TO OUR JOINT INTERESTS. AS OUR INTERESTS WOULD
NOT BE IDENTICAL WE SHOULD NOT, HOWEVER, TIE OUR POLICY
TO THAT OF IRAN OR PAKISTAN. IN THE EVENT OF A
LEFTIST COUP WE SHOULD SEEK TO INVOLVE ISLAMIC STATES
(ESPECIALLY THE MORE CONSERVATIVE ONES) IN CALLING FOR
AN AFGHAN GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD GUARANTEE CONTINUANCE
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OF GOOD RELATIONS WITHIN THE ISLAMIC COMMUNITY OF NATIONS.
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